

Trinity Church, Oxford
Church Land and Oxford Road, Fox Chase
Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-17

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
Revised Copies of Master Drawings

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Joseph P. Sims, District Officer
2008 Architects Building,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

TRINITY CHURCH, OXFORD
Church Lane and Oxford Road, Foxchase
Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania

Owners - The Rector, Church Wardens and Vestrymen of Trinity Church,
Rev. Waldemar Jansen, Jr., Rector, 411 Gilham Street, Lawn-
dale, Philadelphia.

Date of Erection - Original building 1711, with additions as noted be-
low.

Present Condition - Good state of preservation. Old portion preserves
outside and in its original appearance. The 19th Century chan-
cel reflects the taste of the period.

Number of Stories - One

Materials of Construction - Foundations, brick; floors, wood; walls,
brick; roof, wood shingles.

Other existing Records - In addition to references given below, are:
"Two Discourses Relating to the Early History of Trinity Church,
Oxford, Philadelphia" by Rev. Edward Y. Buchanan, DD, 1885.
"History of Philadelphia" by Scharf and Westcott, 1884, vol. II
pages 1349-50. Nearly all the books on the early history of the
city and on the architecture of the period refer to Trinity
Church. "Colonial Churches and Meeting Houses of Pennsylvania,
New Jersey and Delaware" by P.B. Wallace and W.A. Dunn, 1931, con-
tains some excellent photographs.

Additional Data - The original building replaces a log meeting house
used by the followers of George Keith, who separated from the
Society of Friends in 1691, some joining the Church of England,
others becoming Baptists and Seventh Day Baptists. Church of
England services were held here as early as 1698.

The building of 1711 extended only as far as the transepts.
There were no pews and no finished floor. In 1759 pews were in-
stalled and part of the building floored over. In 1807 the floor-
ing was completed, the windows made uniform, the door on the north
side was blocked up and a new door opened on the west end. In
1833 the two transepts were added and in 1839 a tower to contain
a vestry and Sunday school room was built. This tower was cut down
in 1875 and the height made uniform with the rest of the Church
and the present tower was built. A chalice still in use was pre-
sented by Queen Anne in 1713.

Among the long line of Rectors were Dr. William Smith, 1766,
first Provost of the College of Philadelphia (afterwards the Univer-
sity of Pennsylvania), and Edward Young Buchanan, 1854 to 1882, a

brother of President James Buchanan.

The Church is built of red brick. In the original building the brickwork is laid in Flemish bond with dark vitrified headers, forming "diamond" and "figure eight" patterns. From the line of the eaves the brick of the west gable is laid in English bond. The dark headers do not occur in the later work.

The later additions, particularly the tower, which show the mechanical methods of their day make but a poor showing alongside the charming irregularities of the hand work of the old portion, which in character and workmanship corresponds to the best to be found in Philadelphia.

References: 1- Pamphlet entitled "Directory of Trinity Parish, Oxford", dated February 1930, written by William Overington, Jr., Accounting Warden. 2- Historic Sketch by Rev. Linus Parsons Bissell, on the occasion of the celebration of the Bi-Centenary of the Parish, in the Public Ledger newspaper, October 23, 1898.

E. Parob Bissell

District Officer.

TRINITY CHURCH, OXFORD
Church Lane and Oxford Road, Foxchase
Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania

The roots of the "Church at Oxon" strike deep into the earliest colonial life of the city. The lonely little log meeting house, the gift of converted Quakers, and later, the very brick walls of the present nave, stood surrounded by pines and cedars, nine miles from the village of Philadelphia, on the straggling Oxford road, long before Carpenter's Hall or Independence Hall were thought of. The land was conveyed, in trust, for Oxford Church to the same Joshua Carpenter, who afterwards built Carpenter's Hall.

The stones in the churchyard, dated 1708, the earliest that can be deciphered, must have stood in front of the log building, as the brick church was built in 1711, when the bricks were said to have been imported from England.

Oxford is probably the oldest church in Pennsylvania, in which continuous Episcopal services have been held for nearly two centuries.

One hoary stone, worn by time and vandalism, tradition credits with the date 1686, and is said to mark the grave of an Indian. One, nearly destroyed, has the name "Rambo" alone, and the same name is marked in one of the pews in the plan in the old "Vestry Book," when, having resolved to "pew the church," each man took his tools and lumber and built his own. It is hard to leave the old book, even for recent events, say, of 100 years ago.

Aside from the sister churches of St. David's, Radnor; St. Thomas's, Whitemarsh, and All Saints', Lower Dublin, for years under one minister, sent by Bishop Compton, London, and afterwards by the S.F.C., Oxford is the mother of many flourishing missions: St. Luke's, Germantown; Church of Our Saviour, Jenkintown; St. Mark's, Frankford; All Saints', Lower Dublin; Emanuel, Holmesburg; Memorial Church of the Holy Nativity, Rockledge, and Trinity Chapel, Crescentville. Though the early rectors deplored the depletion of her strength by the missions, the old parish has always bravely rallied, and to-day she stands, vigorous and full of life in her old age, with a firmer hold than ever on the hearts of her proud children.

The present tower, with bell, was the gift of Mrs. Mary Lardner in 1875, and is used for a vestry. She was a generous friend to the church. Mr. George Kirkham, of Philadelphia, in 1855, had made for Oxford and brought from England a fine red altar cloth, embroidered by one of the Sisterhoods in London, and it is still in use. He also gave a baptismal font and walnut chancel rail, which, at the restoration, was placed around the choir recess. At this time, the stoves, with long white-washed pipes, gave place to a modern furnace.

The Queen Anne chalice was sent by the queen in 1713, and as she died in 1714 it was probably the last one sent to America.

It was her favorite way of showing her love of the colonial churches. It has never been kept for special services, but has been used in every Holy Communion for nearly two centuries; indeed, Oxford had no other chalice until an interesting congregation created a need for another, and Mr. Harry Ingersoll had an exact duplicate made and presented.

More curious is the paten given by the pastor, James Humphreys, and some friends, in Christ Church. The primitive workmanship is evident, and the engraving delightfully naive. Thus it reads:

Given to Trinity Church in Oxford.

	oz.	wt.
M. Michall Booth gave of this		
silver in A Cupp	5	10
Dotor Samuel Monckton	3	6
Mr. Tho. Cress	1	0
	s.	d.
Mr. Joh. Humphreys Pastr	16	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mr. Phil Syng, Goldsmith	5	0
9th March, 1715.		

The Church possesses a rare and beautiful piece of altar linen of antique design. Fine and glossy as satin, still perfect in the weaving, it is quaintly marked in cross stitch, with dark blue silk:

"For Oxford Church
1792."

Quotation from the Public Ledger, Philadelphia,
October 28, 1898.

Rev. Oct 7.36 - JAW

Trinity Church, Oxford
(Protestant Episcopal)
6900-02 Oxford Avenue, at
SW corner Disston Street and Oxford Avenue
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-17

HABS
PA,
ST-PHILA,
37 -

Addendum to:

Trinity Church, Oxford
Church Lane and Oxford Road,
Foxchase
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania
(as recorded in the 1930s)

PHOTOGRAPHS

ADDENDUM TO
TRINITY CHURCH, OXFORD (EPISCOPAL)
6900-6902 Oxford Avenue
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-17

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013